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PROGRAMMING AND COORDINATION MATTERS RELATED TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Armenia*, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Cambodia*, Canada*, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire*, Cyprus, Czech Republic*, Denmark*, El Salvador*, Finland, Iceland*, Japan, Kenya, Liberia*, Liechtenstein*, Marshall Islands*, Micronesia (Federated States of)*, Netherlands*, New Zealand*, Nigeria*, Norway*, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea*, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Samoa*, Slovenia*, Solomon Islands*, Spain, Suriname*, Sweden*, Thailand, Turkey*, United States of America* and Venezuela: draft resolution

Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling also Article 8 of the Charter, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

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* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recalling further the relevant paragraphs of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1/ especially paragraphs 79, 315, 356 and 358,

Recalling further the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies that have continued to focus on this area since the adoption of Assembly resolution 2715 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, in which the question of the employment of women in the Professional category was first addressed,

Concerned at the serious and continuing underrepresentation of women in the Secretariat, particularly at the higher decision-making levels,

Convinced that the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat could significantly enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the United Nations, including its leadership role in advancing the status of women world wide and in promoting the full participation of women in all aspects of decision-making,

Recalling the goal, set in General Assembly resolutions 45/125 of 14 December 1990 and 45/239 C of 21 December 1990 and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 46/100 of 16 December 1991, 47/93 of 16 December 1992, 48/106 of 20 December 1993 and 49/167 of 23 December 1994, of a 35 per cent overall participation rate of women in posts subject to geographical distribution by 1995,

Noting with concern that the current rate of increase in the appointment of women may not be sufficient to achieve the objective of a 35 per cent participation rate of women in posts subject to geographical distribution by 1995,

Recalling the goal, set in General Assembly resolution 45/239 C and reaffirmed in Assembly resolutions 46/100, 47/93, 48/106 and 49/167, of a 25 per cent participation rate of women in posts at the D-1 level and above by 1995,

Noting with disappointment that the participation rate of women in posts at the D-1 level and above remains unacceptably low, and well below the 25 per cent goal,

Noting the efforts made in the past year by the Secretary-General and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat to integrate the objectives set by the General Assembly for the improvement of the status of

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1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85/IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

women in the Secretariat into the overall strategy for the management of the Organization's human resources, and noting also that such a comprehensive approach will be conducive to enhancing the status of women in the Secretariat,

Recognizing the importance of providing equal employment opportunities for all staff,

Aware that a comprehensive policy aimed at preventing sexual harassment should be an integral part of personnel policy,

Commending the Secretary-General for his administrative instruction on procedures for dealing with cases of sexual harassment,

Bearing in mind that a visible commitment by the Secretary-General is essential to the achievement of the targets set by the General Assembly,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat 2/ while regretting the lateness in the availability of the report;

2. Also takes note of the strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995-2000), 3/ as contained in the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General, and of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan as proposed by the Secretary-General;

3. Urges the Secretary-General to implement fully the strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995-2000), noting that his visible commitment is essential to the achievement of the targets set by the General Assembly and the goals and objectives contained in the strategic plan;

4. Welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to ensure implementation of the strategic plan through, inter alia, the issuance of clear and specific instructions as to the authority and responsibility of all managers in implementing the plan and the criteria by which performance will be appraised;

5. Urges the Secretary-General, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and in such a way as is consistent with the strategic plan, to accord greater priority to the recruitment and promotion of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, particularly in senior policy-level and decision-making posts and within those parts of the United Nations system and the specialized agencies where representation of women is considerably below the average, in order to achieve the goals set in General Assembly resolutions 45/125 and 45/239 C of an overall participation rate of 35 per cent by 1995 and in posts at the D-1 level and above of 25 per cent by 1995;

2/ A/49/587 and Corr.1.

3/ Ibid., sect. IV.

6. Also urges the Secretary-General to examine further existing work practices within the United Nations system with a view to increasing flexibility so as to remove direct or indirect discrimination against staff members with family responsibilities, including consideration of such issues as spouse employment, job-sharing, flexible working hours, child-care arrangements, career-break schemes and access to training;

7. Further urges the Secretary-General to increase the number of women employed in the Secretariat from developing countries, particularly those that are unrepresented or underrepresented, and from other countries that have a low representation of women, including countries in transition;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that equal employment opportunities exist for all staff;

9. Also requests the Secretary-General to enable, from within existing resources, the Focal Point on the Status of Women within the Secretariat to effectively monitor and facilitate progress in the implementation of the strategic plan;

10. Strongly encourages Member States to support the strategic plan and the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to increase the percentage of women in the Professional category, especially in posts at the D-1 level and above, by identifying and sending forward more women candidates, encouraging women to apply for vacant posts and creating national rosters of women candidates to be shared with the Secretariat, the specialized agencies and the regional commissions;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to further develop comprehensive policy measures aimed at the prevention of sexual harassment in the Secretariat;

12. Also requests the Secretary-General to ensure that a progress report on the status of women in the Secretariat containing, inter alia, information on activities undertaken towards the achievement of the goals and objectives contained in the strategic plan and policy measures aimed at the prevention of sexual harassment in the Secretariat is presented to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fortieth session, in accordance with the relevant rules concerning the timetable for delivery of documentation, and to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.